



Department of  
Toxic Substances  
Control

*Preventing  
environmental  
damage from  
hazardous waste,  
and restoring  
contaminated  
sites for all  
Californians.*



State of California



California  
Environmental  
Protection Agency

Fact Sheet, August 2007

**Community Update**

## Update on Environmental Conditions at Germain Street Elementary School

Contractors working on behalf of the Los Angeles Unified School District (LAUSD) were recently trenching for utility lines near the YMCA Bungalow to upgrade the current methane mitigation system when hydrogen sulfide (H<sub>2</sub>S) was detected.

H<sub>2</sub>S is a flammable and colorless gas with a characteristic odor of rotten eggs. H<sub>2</sub>S occurs naturally in crude petroleum and natural gas, and from the breakdown of waste matter; it is often found in leaking sewer lines.

There is **no** immediate health risk at the school site because the H<sub>2</sub>S is isolated beneath the ground; H<sub>2</sub>S was detected only in Extraction Wells 1 and 3 (see figure on back) at depths of 10 to 30 feet and has not been detected in the air spaces beneath the bungalows. However, because exposure to H<sub>2</sub>S has the potential to cause serious health effects, DTSC is working with LAUSD to prevent exposures at the school site and to identify the source of this chemical.

Teachers and students who normally use the YMCA bungalow have been temporarily relocated during supplemental sampling activities. The three classroom bungalows near the extraction wells will continue to be monitored daily to ensure conditions do not change.

### Measures Taken to Ensure Safety

- Extraction wells are covered and bolted
- Daily monitoring of the affected area
- Sampling conducted in crawl spaces and around the bungalows after the Aug. 9 earthquake indicated no presence of methane or H<sub>2</sub>S in those areas
- An investigation is underway to evaluate the source and removal of the H<sub>2</sub>S

DTSC will provide an update to the community the week of August 27.

If you have any questions regarding these activities, please contact:

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